GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2621
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2001
RELEASE OF CREW MEMBERS
MAHESHWAR SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian cargo vessel `MSV` Raj Laxmi with 15 crew on board and sailing from Dubai to Mundra (Gujarat) sank in to sea and its crew members were arrested by the Pakistani authorities and lodged in Pasni jail;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government for their release?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a) Yes, Sir. One of the crew members reportedly died and 14 managed to swim to Pakistani coast where they were arrested by Pakistani authorities.

(b) & (c) On receiving the news, Government immediately took up the matter of release and repatriation of the 14 crew members with the Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels. On persistent efforts undertaken by the Government, the Government of Pakistan on 21.11.2001 acknowledged the detention of 14 crew members of MSV Raj-Laxmi and has agreed to provide consular access to them. In accordance with normal practice, their repatriation will be arranged after the consular access is over and other procedures are completed.